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JACOB MARIS,

DE KOEPELKERK, AMSTERDAM

*In the Julius Oehme Galleries.**This magnificent example of JACOB MARIS was described in a former number.*

## THE TWENTY-EIGHTH EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARTISTS.

The expected Society show was opened with undiminished éclat.

A brother scribe hailed me at press-view with a half-teasing: "Aha, optimist!"

*A la bonheur!* Why not look at the bright side of things, have faith in human nature and human capabilities, and help with encouragement what may not be extolled.

I learn that many pictures, savoring of all manners, modes and styles, submitted to the critical ordeal of the jury, have been rejected, and that, as usual, the condemning fiat of the council has been received by the disappointed with inward anger and outward complaints; with the usual murmurings against injustice, favoritism, prejudice and want of discernment among the august members of the jury.

But we need not concern ourselves at the present with these bickerings and turn to a show which is in all respects satisfactory. Of course, there is a very large number of indifferent pictures in this collection of almost 450 numbers. These are the emanations of men, of whom we expect not much else. It must be said that, while a few have not done so well as we expect from them, others held their own, and a few advanced slightly; none, however, to a degree as was shown at the last Academy exhibition.

In speaking thus freely of the general character of the exhibition, I do not mean to condemn the collection, or to depreciate the talent of even the meanest of the aspirants for the future honors of fame. I know not

amongst these practitioners who may be destined to remain dunces in art, or who may henceforth shine amidst a new galaxy of genius.

My occupation is not, as seems the case with some other writers, to discourage laudable exertion by seeking occasion to find fault, but rather to encourage talent by pointing out what is promising and augurs favorably of future progress, if not of present attainment.

The collection cannot be described in such a way that every meritorious picture shall be mentioned. Only as this "looker-on in Verona" felt impressed at the moment, does he record these impressions, leaving to the discriminating visitor an opportunity to discover still greater merit in works not mentioned.

A few general observations to start with.

I must add two new names to my list of American Marine painters which appeared in the last number. They are Frederick J. Waugh and Emil Carlsen. That "Seventh Wave," by Waugh, No. 55, and "A Lazy Sea," No. 374, by Carlsen are paintings that accredit these artists high rank amongst the painters of the briny. Almost had I added Bryson Burroughs for No. 75, "The Sea," but while I recognize the vast possibility in his painting the water is still secondary. The figures of bathers carrying a drowned comrade ashore are, however, masterly and have the impressiveness of one of Victor Hugo's wordpictures.

And as we are looking at marines, I may as well state that the most impressive ones, besides those mentioned are by Carlton T. Chapman in his "Sea Fight," No. 232; the one by Will Robinson, No. 61; and the trio by Woodbury, Nos. 90, 255 and 308. These three are epics.

The man who most impressed me for what he shows here is F. Luis Mora. In fact so much that I propose to give an article to this man's work next month. But oh—how I commiserate with him, when one of the critic says: "F. Luis Mora is seen to excellent advantage in several paintings, each one different in method and style." I can just imagine the wry face he made, if he read it. Presumably that writer meant well, but to accuse Mora of being so loose-jointed as to skip about in method and style, while he has more fully arrived at individual expression than any other American artist of his age—it is too bad. His sterling and unchangeable personality in method and style make him one of the few men in this country who need not sign their pictures—they are signed all over.

And so much for criticism "as she is wrote."

Another man who greatly impressed me is Granville-Smith. He has gotten into his stride. The three numbers, 94, 103, 243, show again further progress over his Academy exhibits, and those were the best he had ever done.

The George de Forrest Brush group, No. 321, "Mother Reading to Children," is a gem. The owner, Mr. F. S. Smithers, is to be congratulated with the possession of one of the masterpieces of American Art.

Abboth H. Thayer's decoration, "A Winged Figure," No. 320, occupies the most prominent place and *must* therefore be noticed, but all I can say is that while showing the artist's skill in drawing and composition it is somewhat raw and garish in color. It is not up to his Boston Museum picture.

Irving R. Wiles shows again one of the best portraits in the show. It is No. 303, of Dr. J. W. Burgess. And as we are looking at portraits we are of course attracted to Sergeant Kendall's Portrait of a mother and two children, No. 329, which is a clean, clear performance of wonderful, magnetic power.

Of the two portraits made of Hugo Ballin, the one worthy of mention is No. 259, by Victor D. Hecht, a capital piece of painting. The portrait

of Col. Myles G. Collier by Geo. H. Reeves, No. 184, is also far above the average of conventional likenesses.

Robert D. Gauley has a handsome looking portrait of a young woman, "Miss M. de C." No. 135, which has a good many excellent points. There is a good deal of reserve in the handling, and even though the lines of contour may be a trifle too insistent, the whole leaves a very satisfactory impression.

Of the two portraits by Robert Henri, hanging in the Vanderbilt Gallery, Nos. 357 and 365, I like the latter one of a young woman in white and brown by far the best. It is a thoroughly characteristic and personal work.

Henri has naturally a good many followers and the portrait by Kathryn T. Raymond is undoubtedly influenced by him. There is much brilliancy and dash in this No. 205.

The newer school is well represented by the types of Jerome Meyers, W. Glackens, Jean McLane, and Augustus Koopman's street scene.

Some more pictures which stand far out of the rest are No. 325, "The Fur Pelisse," by J. Alden Weir, which is a fine study for technique and will appeal especially to artists. C. Curran's "Flying Kites," No. 45, is rather better than the pretty things we generally expect from him. It has somewhat of Walcott's 'get up' about it, that marks improvement over Curran's too sugary compositions.

R. K. Mygatt's landscapes, especially the two hanging in the Central Gallery, Nos. 115 and 150, bear me out in my formerly expressed high estimation of this artist's talent.

Everett Shinn contributes four canvases, Nos. 23, 28, 33 and 219, which all arrested my steps. They give a feeling as if this artist is pretty nearly through with experimenting. There is greater seriousness in this work. True—they represent the same lively scenes we have become accustomed to; nevertheless, they breathe a more genuine spirit, deeper sincerity in striving for technical excellence, instead of his former content with superficial piquancy and cleverness.

To comment in all kindness on some work of well-known men, I would say that there is getting to be some monotony about Redfield's many hill-sides, that Louis Loeb seems to have struck a favorite string on which he continues to harp, and that Hugo Ballin is also getting a little tiresome in his old tapestry effects.

In Ballin's case this must, however, be ascribed to a species of mental lassitude—that the artist has brains is proved by his new conception of "Susanna at the Bath" in No. 293. I do not refer to the color scheme, which is somewhat more florid than is his wont. It is the composition that strikes me as unusual. If memory of the old records serves aright, I am under the impression that Susanna was very much surprised and shocked when the elders spied upon her. And from the earliest Italians, through Rubens and the later painters this view has invariably been taken. In Mr. Ballin's work we find her, however, very sociably listening to the wily old gentlemen, who seem to advance the relative superiority of their commercial claims.

What does the artist mean? Does he wish to insinuate that what is happening in modern life might just as well have happened in ancient times, and that Susanna was no better than she might have been? If such was the painter's intent I must say that the picture is very realistic.

Let us now turn to some paintings that are especially good and whose authors are more or less newcomers. These numbers should be looked up by the visitor, for they reveal work that augurs well.

Note, then, No. 19, by Henning Rydén, "Return of the Boats," which is an excellent night scene; No. 82, "The Girl with Pearls," by Dana R.

Pond, unfortunately skied; No. 173, "Young Girl in White," by Lida S. Price—very good, indeed; No. 194, "Foliage Clusters," by Gustave Cimiotti—very strong and entirely out of the common; and No. 315, "Sketch of an Old Man," by Joseph Stella—another good painting badly hung.

In reading over the above I find that I have mentioned some thirty paintings out of 400 and more. Now, any one giving but a passing glance to the walls will notice that the general impression is very gratifying, which is caused by the large number of good pictures and the scarcity of really bad ones. A list follows of twenty more paintings, which contribute the largest share to this pleasing and high-class character of the exhibition. I take them in order of the catalogue:

No. 15, H. B. Snell, "The Coast Guard Cliffs, Polperro"; the fine canvases by Albert Groll, Nos. 44 and 60; No. 65, Lewis Cohen, "Willows and Stream"; No. 104, W. T. Hays, "The Fire Engine"; No. 119, Henry Prellwitz, "Ariel Sings"; No. 159, Jules Guerin, "Pittsburg"; No. 177, Verplanck Birney, in a new track of genre, "The World Forgotten"; No. 178, Charles Vezin, "Sunset"; No. 187, Walter L. Palmer, "December Daybreak"; No. 220, Lewis Herzog, "November Snow"; No. 252, Paul King, "Taking Off the Captain"; No. 274, E. Potthast, "St. John's Fire, Swiss Alps"; No. 275, Cullen Yates, "Spring"; No. 287, Andrew T. Schwartz, "Temptation"—which is one of the best paintings of the nude in the collection; No. 295, Walter Nettleton, "Midnight and Waning Moon"; No. 316, Leonard Ochtman, "Dawn"; No. 322, David Walkley, "Woodland Echoes"; No. 327, J. Francis Murphy, "A Summer Morning"; and No. 352, Childe Hassam, "June," because it is the largest canvas in the show and got the Carnegie prize. Only one more painting will be referred to. The hanging of the pictures is only passable, as glaring canvases in crude colors or broad treatment stare at one from the line, and delicate shades and atmospheric effects are skied—this is a failure of most hanging committees. The Brobdignagian blunder was made, however, when No. 438, "Schumann," by Warren B. Davis, was skied in the ante-room. It is a wonderful composition, full of sentiment and refined in its tones, and received the Evans prize at the last Salma-gundi Club exhibition for the best figure painting there. It is impossible to find an excuse for this "putting out of the way" of one of the best pictures in the show.

The Sculpture exhibited consists mainly of small pieces, many of good quality. The best little bit of sculpture is the "Yawning Woman," by Paul Nocquet, No. 444, which should have been placed in the South or Vanderbilt Gallery, as one requires to walk around it to get all the good points. The sculptor-member of the Hanging Committee poked it away against the wall in the ante-room—spite of which it may still attract attention. Any one who says that this piece is suggestive had better use some moral soap.

The most ambitious group is No. 110, "Polar Bears," by F. G. R. Roth—a magnificent example of the plastic art, by a young man who is bound to attain fame.

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While workmen were engaged in renovating the Church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Franti some ancient frescoes were disclosed behind the monument of Doge Nicolo Tron. One of the frescoes represents a canopy with the coat of arms of Doge Tron, and another consists of decorative bands with figures of the evangelists in medallions. The discovery is regarded as of great artistic importance.